

NO WAY OF KNOWING

I wrote something about Ralph Kramden & Alice
by the time it reached print
a) I had become a busdriver
b) left the woman for whom it had been written
c) moved around the corner from where I had been
living for most of my adult life
Kramden told me he's had it
up & down up & down up & down
he can't take it
too much stress
he & Alice are moving to Vermont
peace & quiet & time
to write about his 35 years as a busdriver

PRETTY - PRETTY

I used to see her in the neighborhood
walking with her pretty self
never said more than hi
eventually I moved to another town
the years passed
& one night she got on my bus
it's YOU I said to her pretty self
within 2 weeks
I moved out of a 3-year situation
& right in with her pretty self
I told a busdriver about it
over a game of pool
"You must be one hell of a talker"
was his only comment

ANOTHER FILTHY LIE

Abby's readers make the issues so clear
it's a Disney movie
the issue is forgiveness
Abby likes that subject
she keeps returning to it
if only we'd forgive that relative
everything would be all better
according to Abby
relatives who go for years without talking
can't even remember how it all started
it's a simple case of pettiness
there is no deceit
lack of love
vindictive tendencies
or a trace of selfishness involved
& even if there were ...

it could all be resolved like a Xmas movie
by the simple act of forgiving
it's a lie
sometimes it takes great will-power
NOT to forgive someone
who makes a practice of hurting you

THIS EDITOR

she likes surrealism
but it has to be coherent
yeah
a psychotic is cool
as long as there's a little self-control

GOING BACK SEVEN

Boston to St Pete
cancer eating his guts
his mouth puckered & he was gone
I put what was left in the ground
his daughter picked up the money
he'd already told me I had nothing coming
he taught me how to read
pointed out the character actors of the '30s
how to distinguish the different instruments
& how to sing in 2-part harmony
mostly I learned how not to be
a father & a husband
he left in '61
died in '81
& he's making more sense all the time

— John Levin

Cambridge MA

CLOWN DEATH: 1

the painted grin
turns to a just
apparent grimace

CLOWN DEATH: 2

somewhat surprised
the clown falls
and does not rise

— M. K. Book

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